COLLECTORS' CORNER #68 JANUARY 30, 1976
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A MAN WHO COLLECTS IDEAS

ANNCR: AND NOW, COLLECTORS' CORNER ...THE VOICE OF AMERICA SERIES OF PROGRAMS FOR LISTENERS WHO COLLECT THINGS -- WHETHER THEY BE STAMPS OR COINS, SNUFF BOTTLES OR OLD AUTOS, OR MERELY BALLS OF STRING. HERE IS ---------- WITH THE STORY OF A COLLECTOR WHO SPECIALIZES IN IDEAS.

NARR: HARRY FREEMAN IS AN INVENTOR. HE IS SEVENTY-NINE YEARS OLD, HOLDS NEARLY ONE HUNDRED PATENTS FOR THINGS HE HAS INVENTED, AND BELIEVES THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE WHO WOULD LIKE TO FOLLOW IN HIS FOOTSTEPS. HE LIVES IN BURRILLVILLE, RHODE ISLAND ...A SMALL TOWN IN A SMALL STATE. BUT THE TOWN HAS ROOM FOR BIG IDEAS, AND MISTER FREEMAN -- DESPITE HIS AGE -- STILL SPENDS ABOUT SIX HOURS EACH DAY TURNING IDEAS INTO REALITY. HE LIKES TO POINT OUT THAT JUST ABOUT HALF OF ALL THE GREAT INVENTIONS OF OUR TIME WERE THE WORK OF INVENTORS WHO ARE STILL ALIVE.

JUST A PARTIAL LIST OF HARRY FREEMAN INVENTIONS SHOWS AN AMAZING DIVERSITY. HE THOUGHT OF THE MERCURY (QUIET OR NO-CLICK) SWITCH USED ON MANY ELECTRICAL CIRCUITS. ALSO THE WORLD'S LARGEST HAMBURGER-MAKER... A MACHINE USED BY THE U.S. ARMY TO TURN OUT SEVEN THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED HAMBURGER PATTIES EACH HOUR. HE HAS ALSO PATENTED A DEVICE TO MARK THE HAND THAT PULLS A FIRE ALARM AND THUS REVEAL THOSE RESPONSIBLE FOR FALSE

NARR: (CONT'D) ALARMS. HE ALSO CAME UP WITH A SIGNAL DEVICE TO ALERT TANKER-SHIPS WHENEVER ANY OIL SPILLAGE OCCURS. HIS FIRST INVENTION CAME WHEN HE WAS AN OFFICER IN THE NAVY IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR. HE THOUGHT UP AND DEVELOPED A METHOD OF SENDING RADIO SIGNALS OVER JUST ONE SET OF WIRES. ALL PREVIOUS SYSTEMS HAD REQUIRED SEVERAL SETS. HE ADMITS THAT WHAT HE CALLS HIS GREATEST INVENTION HAS BEEN A FINANCIAL FAILURE. ITS A NEW METHOD OF BOOKBINDING ELECTRONICALLY WITHOUT USING ANY SEWING OR GLUE. HE SAYS PUBLISHERS WERE VERY IMPRESSED WHEN HE DEMONSTRATED HIS ELECTRONIC BOOKBINDING FOR THEM THIRTY YEARS AGO. BUT THEY DID NOT BUY IT... BECAUSE IT WOULD HAVE MADE ALL THEIR PRESENT EQUIPMENT USELESS AND NOT WORTH A PENNY. BUT HE STILL THINKS HIS METHOD WILL BE ADOPTED... SOME DAY.

MISTER FREEMAN SAYS EVERY INVENTION HE TURNED OUT CAME AFTER SOMEONE ASKED HIM TO DO SOMETHING BETTER. AS HE NEARS THE AGE OF EIGHTY, HE STILL LOOKS TO THE FUTURE WITH OPTIMISM. HE SAYS YOUNG PEOPLE IN COLLEGE THESE DAYS ARE BEING TAUGHT TO THINK FOR TOMORROW. AND HE SAYS THE AVERAGE YOUNG MAN TODAY IS MORE CREATIVE THAN THOSE OF SIXTY YEARS AGO WHEN HE WAS YOUNG.

OP

RIGHT NOW RHODE ISLAND HOSPITALS ARE TESTING ANOTHER FREEMAN INVENTION AND MANUFACTURERS ARE BIDDING FOR THE RIGHT TO MAKE AND SELL IT. MISTER FREEMAN CALLS IT A "THERAPEUTIC BED-PAN." IT IS A SPECIAL MATTRESS DESIGNED TO HEAL AND PREVENT BED-SORES IN HOSPITAL

NARR: (CONT'D) PATIENTS. IT CAUSES A FRESH FLOW OF OXYGEN TO THE PATIENT'S BODY AND REMOVES ANY BODY WASTES THAT MIGHT CAUSE SORES ON THE SKIN'S SURFACE.

OK

JUST INVENTING ISN'T ENOUGH TO KEEP HARRY FREEMAN HAPPY. HE ALSO WORKS AT PHOTOGRAPHY, PAINTING, STAMP COLLECTING AND BOATING. OH YES, HE'S ALSO A WRITER. HE'S PUTTING THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON A HISTORY BOOK RIGHT NOW... ONE GIVING SKETCHES OF TWENTY-ONE MEN MISTER FREEMAN SAYS "DISCOVERED" AMERICA BEFORE COLUMBUS.

ANNCR: THE STORY OF A MAN WHO COLLECTS IDEAS. THIS HAS BEEN COLLECTORS' CORNER... NOTES ON THE WORLD OF COLLECTORS WHO BUY AND SELL AND, ABOVE ALL, CHERISH THINGS FROM STAMPS TO STRING TO THE WORLD'S LARGEST HAMBURGER-MAKER. NEXT WEEK (AT THIS TIME) ANOTHER LOOK INTO THE COLLECTORS' CORNER. THIS IS ----------.

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WJL/CAK